

U.S.S.N. 10/613,242

-2-

GKNG 1159 PUS

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SEP 25 2006

In The Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of producing metal clamping rings for securing sleeves made of an elastic material on components which are movable relative to one another, comprising the steps of:

producing a strip portion from plate metal, the strip portion comprising strip ends which match and complement one another and which are delimited so as to be undercut-free in the longitudinal direction;

bending the strip portion substantially circular to form a cylindrical ring with abutting strip ends; and

welding the strip ends to form a clamping ring which can be readily plastically deformed,

wherein the step of producing includes cutting the strip ends to each have a single straight edge which extends at a right angle relative to the longitudinal direction of the strip portion.

2. (original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of producing includes cutting a coil of strip material into lengths.

3. (cancelled)

4. (cancelled)

5. (currently amended) A method of producing metal clamping rings for securing sleeves made of an elastic material on components which are movable relative to one another, comprising the steps of:

producing a strip portion from plate metal, the strip portion comprising strip ends which match and complement one another and which are delimited so as to be undercut-free in the longitudinal direction;

bending the strip portion substantially circular to form a cylindrical ring with abutting strip ends; and

U.S.S.N. 10/613,242

-3-

GKNG 1159 PUS

welding the strip ends to form a clamping ring which can be readily plastically deformed,

wherein the step of producing includes cutting the strip ends to each have a single straight edge which extends at an oblique angle relative to the longitudinal direction of the strip portion.

6. (previously presented) A method according to claim 5, wherein the step of producing includes cutting a coil of strip material into lengths.

7. (cancelled)

8. (cancelled)

9. (cancelled)

10. (canceled)

11. (original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of welding includes at least one of laser welding, plasma welding or electron-beam welding.

12. (cancelled)

13. (original) A method according to claim 5, wherein the step of welding includes at least one of laser welding, plasma welding or electron-beam welding.

14. (original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of welding the strip ends together includes at least one of continuously welding, stitch welding or point welding the strip ends.

U.S.S.N. 10/613,242

-4-

GKNG 1159 PUS

15. (cancelled)

16. (original) A method according to claim 5, wherein the step of welding the strip ends together includes at least one of continuously welding, stitch welding or point welding the strip ends.

17. (original) A method according to claim 11, wherein the step of welding the strip ends together includes at least one of continuously welding, stitch welding or point welding the strip ends.

18. (previously presented) A method of fixing a sleeve made of an elastic material on components which are movable relative to one another, by use of a metal clamping ring, comprising the steps of:

producing a strip portion from plate metal, the strip portion comprising strip ends which match and complement one another and which are delimited so as to be undercut-free in the longitudinal direction;

bending the strip portion substantially circular to form a cylindrical ring with abutting strip ends;

welding the strip ends to form a clamping ring;

positioning the clamping ring on to an elastic sleeve which is positioned on one of said components; and

radially upsetting the clamping ring, with the clamping ring being permanently plastically deformed and with the sleeve being permanently elastically deformed,

wherein the step of upsetting takes place mechanically by an annular tool which is divided into several segments, and

wherein the step of producing includes cutting the strip ends to each have a single straight edge which extends at a right angle relative to the longitudinal direction of the strip portion.

U.S.S.N. 10/613,242

-5-

GKNG 1159 PUS

19. (previously presented) A method of fixing a sleeve made of an elastic material on components which are movable relative to one another, by use of a metal clamping ring, comprising the steps of:

producing a strip portion from plate metal, the strip portion comprising strip ends which match and complement one another and which are delimited so as to be undercut-free in the longitudinal direction;

bending the strip portion substantially circular to form a cylindrical ring with abutting strip ends;

welding the strip ends to form a clamping ring;

positioning the clamping ring on to an elastic sleeve which is positioned on one of said components; and

radially upsetting the clamping ring, with the clamping ring being permanently plastically deformed and with the sleeve being permanently elastically deformed,

wherein the step of upsetting takes place mechanically by an annular tool which is divided into several segments, and

wherein the step of producing includes cutting the strip ends to each have a single straight edge which extends at an oblique angle relative to the longitudinal direction of the strip portion.

20. (previously presented) A method of fixing a sleeve made of an elastic material on components which are movable relative to one another, by use of a metal clamping ring, comprising the steps of:

producing a strip portion from plate metal, the strip portion comprising strip ends which match and complement one another and which are delimited so as to be undercut-free in the longitudinal direction;

bending the strip portion substantially circular to form a cylindrical ring with abutting strip ends;

welding the strip ends to form a clamping ring;

U.S.S.N. 10/613,242

-6-

GKNG 1159 PUS

positioning the clamping ring on to an elastic sleeve which is positioned on one of said components; and

radially upsetting the clamping ring, with the clamping ring being permanently plastically deformed and with the sleeve being permanently elastically deformed,

wherein the step of upsetting takes place electro-magnetically by annularly arranged magnetic coils, and

wherein the step of producing includes cutting the strip ends to each have a single straight edge which extends at a right angle relative to the longitudinal direction of the strip portion.

21. (previously presented) A method of fixing a sleeve made of an elastic material on components which are movable relative to one another, by use of a metal clamping ring, comprising the steps of:

producing a strip portion from plate metal, the strip portion comprising strip ends which match and complement one another and which are delimited so as to be undercut-free in the longitudinal direction;

bending the strip portion substantially circular to form a cylindrical ring with abutting strip ends;

welding the strip ends to form a clamping ring;

positioning the clamping ring on to an elastic sleeve which is positioned on one of said components; and

radially upsetting the clamping ring, with the clamping ring being permanently plastically deformed and with the sleeve being permanently elastically deformed,

wherein the step of upsetting takes place electro-magnetically by annularly arranged magnetic coils, and

wherein the step of producing includes cutting the strip ends to each have a single straight edge which extends at an oblique angle relative to the longitudinal direction of the strip portion.